

Reclaim Education

Notes on the global struggle

Anti-Racism Protests in Delhi, Tokyo and Amsterdam



Delhi

On February 14th people rallied in Delhi for a march against racism as well as the caste system. The protest was called by the Campaign Against Racism and joined by the Students Federation of India (SFI) as well as other organisations. They demand an anti-racism law in the wake of increasing instances of violence against people from the Northeast of India in Delhi. The demonstration was attacked by police. Several people were seriously injured and around 60 protesters arrested. "Within four to five minutes of our arrival, the lathi-charge began," said Akhum Longkumer, a student at Jawaharlal Nehru University. "I was hit on the back of my head and both of my hands are fractured. Several students have head injuries while others have smashed noses and

broken cheekbones. The force of the assault can be gauged by the fact that a crowd of almost 300 odd students was almost immediately dispersed," Longkumer alleged. "The police also went out of their way to beat us, chasing us for almost a kilometer into the metro station," he added.

Tokyo

On March 16th a racist and nationalist group known as the Zaitokukai held a meeting of around 100 members in Tokyo's Ikebukuro district, with a march planned immediately after. They claim to fight against alleged privileges of foreigners in Japan and propagate racist attitudes, targeting especially people from the Korean Peninsula. Much to the surprise and chagrin of the Zaitokukai, however, they found

themselves outnumbered three to one by a huge cluster of counter-protesters holding anti-racist signs and shouting down the right wingers as they marched. At some point scuffles between protesters attempting to prevent the march of the Zaitokukai and riot police broke up the scuffle. Fortunately no injuries or arrests were reported. It certainly points to an increased dialogue on the topic in Japan. Only five days later more than 100 people also rallied in Tokyo to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Amsterdam

"We are all Moroccans!" was the chant that echoed through the streets of Amsterdam as an estimated 8,000 people marched against racism on March 22. The chant was a direct response to the far right politician Geert Wilders,

who, during the recent local elections, asked his supporters whether they want "more or less Moroccans?" Many were quick to denounce Wilders comments, giving an apparent sense of unity against racism. While enthusiasm is growing among some, others remain skeptical. Organizer Ramona Sno emphasized the hypocrisy on both sides "we have a long tradition of systematically denying and down playing racism in the Netherlands..Parties like PvdA [labor] and VVD [liberal] now pretend to firmly oppose racism, while quite explicit racism has been normalized among members of their own parties."

Greetings of solidarity to the antifa & anti-racist activists resisting exclusionary ideology and group-based enmity around the world each and every day.
1world1struggle

About this newsletter

This newsletter is part of the communication infrastructure of the independent platform International Student Movement (ISM). The ISM is being used and shaped by individuals and groups around the world who are struggling against the increasing commercialisation of education and for free emancipatory education for all. This newsletter is the result of voluntary work done by a few individuals who are passionate about the cause. The positions expressed are not in any way representative for any group or the ISM as a whole.

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RECLAIM EDUCATION – A Global Week of Action (1-8 May 2014)



Students at the University of Osijek in Croatia have issued a call for a global week of action for the first week of May 2014 in opposition to the increasing privatization and commercialization of education. Dozens of activists from various parts of the world then came together during regular chat meetings and agreed to organize for the global week of action by coordinating assemblies and reaching out to our friends.

Generally groups worldwide will arrange their own autonomous activities linking local problems and their efforts with the common global effort. By no means should a gesture of solidarity override the importance of engaging grassroots issues. The framework itself consists simply of a call to action and the international joint statement on education, which is presently supported by more than a hundred groups worldwide.

To visually link the activities around the world it, we are seeking to share common symbols (such as the red square) and slogans emphasizing free education. The timeframe 1-8 May 2014 was chosen to link the struggle within the education system with the workers' struggle on the global level.

An excerpt paraphrases some of the primary points from the call: "Across all continents, people are affected by the increasing commercialization of education and commodification of knowledge. This is vividly portrayed by the daily symptoms, such as the de-democratization and implementation of more hierarchical power structures within institutions of learning. The logic of the market requires that competitiveness and profits take priority over developing the capabilities for thinking. Both depend on consumers, cheap labor

and "consent of the governed" – not individuals living self-determined lives. Hence, this is not only a student's issue, everyone is affected! The present circumstances obstruct us from attaining education and an accompanying environment in which people are stimulated in the development of critical thinking. By contrast, the present system educates us solely within the boundaries of what is compatible with the capitalist paradigm."

Throughout much of the world, budget cuts and accessibility issues will serve as the primary focus of student/worker demonstrations. In other areas, debates surrounding the curriculum are likely to emerge. Those organizing around the global week of action are also seeking to make sure that the intersection of education and decolonial, feminist, anti-racist, queer and anti-authoritarian issues are addressed throughout the terrain of the university. This May Day; let's not be remembered for what we didn't do. See you in the streets.

Make sure to contact at the global ISM mailing list to announce your activities.

For more information, updates, and student art work visit... reclaimededucation.wordpress.com.

Top Left Image: Montreal, 2012 Unlimited Student General Strike.

(Cover) Sources:
southasia.oneworld.net
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Common Symbols

